

GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND JUSTICE CLINIC • SCHOOL OF LAW

May 17, 2002

Mr. Barry Young
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
939 Ellis Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

By facsimile to: 415-749-5030 and by U.S. Mail

Re: Public Comment on the Proposed Major Facility Permit for the Rhodia, Inc., Facility #B1661

Dear Mr. Young:

I am writing you today on behalf of Our Children's Earth Foundation, in order to comment on the proposed Major Facility Review permit for the Rhodia, Inc., Facility #B1661. We believe that the proposed permit is not currently acceptable and needs to be revised prior to finalization. Our reasons for objecting to the current draft are as follows:

Insufficient Statement of Basis. We continue to maintain that the District should prepare more comprehensive basis statements in order to make its major facility permits more understandable to reviewers and the general public. The Rhodia basis statement needs to contain a more detailed facility description, including information on the permitted and exempt sources and their emissions (type and quantity), a discussion of the overall production process including a diagram showing the linkage of the facility process equipment, and the history of the construction and modification of the process system. This information provides the necessary factual background for the District's permit decisions.

2. Spent Alkylating Acid Tanks. The facility uses several large capacity storage tanks to hold spent alkylating acid (e.g., S-19, S-20, and S-54). The Permit Evaluation and Basis Statement states that the spent acid stored in these tanks may contain up to 15 percent organic compounds. It also states that the vapor pressure of the mixture is expected to be less than 0.5 psia. However, no evidence is presented to verify this statement. SIP Regulation 8-5-117 stipulates that in order to be exempt from the provisions of SIP Regulation 8-5, the spent acid must be shown to have a vapor pressure less than 0.5 psia, and SIP Regulation 8-5-602 requires that the material be tested. Therefore, source testing should be required in order to exempt these sources from Regulation 8-5. We recommend that source tests be carried out on a periodic basis until the variability in the organic content of the acid mixture has been adequately characterized.

In addition, these sources also appear to be subject to SIP Regulation 8-2, which limits organic vapor emissions from miscellaneous operations to 15 pounds per day and a concentration of less than or equal to 300 ppm total carbon. This condition should be included in the permit along with appropriate compliance monitoring requirements.

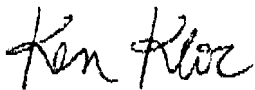
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3. Other operations with VOC-containing fluids. Any other miscellaneous facility operations that store, process or transfer VOC-containing solutions also appear to be subject to SIP Regulation 8-2. This should be documented in the permit, and appropriate conditions and monitoring requirements should be placed upon the sources.
4. Section VII. This section is missing tables, or at least table entries, that describe various compliance monitoring requirements for the abatement devices. For example, Permit Condition #13337.18 requires visible emissions monitoring for A-16. However, there is no table in Section VII for A-16, nor is there any mention of A-16 monitoring requirements in the tables for related sources S-51 or S-52. Please revise this section to include all monitoring requirements for the abatement devices. We recommend that the monitoring requirements specific to the abatement devices be placed in separate abatement-device tables, rather than being included in the source tables.
5. Permit Condition #2756.2. No justification has been provided for changing the odor complaint threshold from 2 to 5 confirmed complaints. Given that the facility processes odiferous materials, we believe that the original permit condition is reasonable and should be retained.
6. Permit condition #2756.17 requires that pressure drop across A-7 be measured on a monthly basis. However, the CAPCOA-ARB-EPA guidance for periodic monitoring of wet scrubbers recommends weekly recording of pressure drop and scrubbing liquid flow rate, and a weekly qualitative check to make sure that the settling pond is working adequately. The monitoring requirements for A-7 should be changed to reflect this guidance.
7. Permit Condition #13337. According to this condition, visible particulate emissions at S-51, S-52, A-16, A-17 are to be checked on an annual basis. We recommend that visible emissions be monitored on a quarterly basis to account for weather and other sources of variability.
8. Permit Condition #17734.17. In addition to requiring the monitoring of pH at A-2 and A-11 we recommend that the scrubbing liquid flow rate be monitored on a weekly basis when the scrubber is operating.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any question regarding this correspondence.

Sincerely,



Ken Kloc
Staff Scientist